



The Pileup

Newsletter of the CDXA

Peter I Island On the DX Horizon

Imagine the thrill of going on a DXpedition to an island well inside the antarctic circle where thousands of amateur radio operators awaited your arrival to activate an entity that was last visited 10 years ago. Then imagine feeling you are a part of that without facing freezing weather, iceberg laden seas, and being seasick during the journey to and from the island, *and* still having a chance to work the DXpedition for your log. You say the latter option is preferable for you? Then, consider supporting the DXpedition financially.

Not long ago, Treasurer Jim Miller received a letter from Bob Allphin, K4UEE, and Ralph Fedor, K0IR, regarding their planned DXpedition to Peter I Island from 14 January 2005 to 10 February 2005. This “summer” visit to Peter I at 900 miles further south than Bouvet Island only promises relative warmth for the DXpeditioner and holds plenty of danger.

The island is 95% covered by glaciers that sweep down from the mile-high volcanic Mt. Lars Christiansen and abruptly terminate in ice cliffs that fall 150 feet to the sea. The only safe way on and off the island is via helicopter. The team is expected to be QRV from 21 January to 4 February. There have only

W4VHF	Ted Goldthorpe	President
N4HN	Tom Wright	Vice-Pres.
K4SQR	Jim Miller	Sec.-Treas.
K4MD	Joe Simpkins	Cluster Mgr.
W3GQ	Paul Sturpe	Assoc. Cluster Mgr.
WB4BXW	Wayne Setzer	Webmaster
K8YC	John Scott	Editor

been two previous DXpeditions to Peter I—one in 1987 and the second in 1994—netting a total of 77,000 QSOs.

Securing an ice-rated vessel of sufficient size to transport the team safely with all their gear, plus the requirement for a helicopter and its flight and maintenance crew is a very expensive undertaking. The members of the team will be defraying about 70% of their own costs so that we can enjoy working them from the comfort of our home.

As DXers, we must “lend a hand” for worthy efforts. In supporting a DXpedition to Peter I, we can rest assured that we’re not providing funds for anyone to bask in the “summer sunshine” on some idyllic islet. Accordingly, the officers of CDXA hope you will personally join the club in supporting the Peter I DXpedition. Here’s how:

- ◆ Each member may contribute to support of the DXpedition to the extent that he/she is able.
- ◆ CDXA will match the contributions of the membership from the club treasury up to \$500.

Your officers believe with reasonable participation from our 170+ members an aggregate contribution of more than \$1000 to help this worthy effort is quite possible. All contributions will be consolidated into a lump sum, the CDXA matching portion added, and an award will be made to the DXpedition team in the name of “The Membership of CDXA”. Identity of individual contributors will not be disclosed. In showing our support at the \$1000 level, the logo

CDXA PacketCluster & Other Communication Systems		
W4DXA (11 mi. NE of Mooresville)	144.93 MHz (1200 bits/second)	441.00 MHz (9600 bits/second)
K4MD Charlotte, NC	144.91 MHz (1200 bits/second)	441.075 MHz (9600 bits/second)
CDXA Repeater 147.18 MHz (+600)	W4DXA, Near Fort Mill, SC	
World Wide Web Homepage	www.cdx.org	
Wednesday Luncheon (11:30 AM)	Shoney's, 355 Woodlawn Road, Charlotte, NC (704-525-4395)	

of your club will appear on the QSL card, and through your personal contribution, you'll surely feel as though you played your part.

As a group, let's get behind this DXpedition. Jim Miller has agreed to act as a collection point. We intend to present our contribution by no later than the end of September, 2004. **Please send your contribution no later than September 15 to: Jim Miller, 11600 Hilda Ct., Charlotte, NC 28226.** We'll provide an update to the fund raising in the September, 2004 issue of The Pileup.

DXCC Submission Time Approaches

ATTENTION!! We're into the month of August with this issue of the **PILEUP**. It is time to start getting your QSL cards together so you can make your DXCC submission by the end of September, 2004. If you're planning on having Gary Dixon check your cards, you ought to let him know so he doesn't get swamped by too many cards showing up at the last minute.

If using Logbook of The World this year, there is a new wrinkle so that you don't get charged for two submissions if submitting both LoTW and regular QSL cards. When Wayne Mills of the ARRL was asked how this would work the answer was that there is a box to be checked on the LoTW submission that asks whether you'll also be making a paper submission. (*A similar box is on the paper submission form. —The Editor*) If checked, it will indicate to the DXCC desk that both modes will be used. I understand only one "submission fee" will be charged this year. Next year? It's anybody's guess. So gather those cards, alphabetize, and start filling out your DXCC submission form!

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Official Newsletter of the Carolina DX Association
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Published monthly 10 times per year, excluding the months of June and December.

The purpose of the association is to secure for the members the pleasures and benefits of the association of persons having a common interest in Amateur Radio.

Members of the CDXA shall adhere to "The Amateur's Code" as published from time to time in *The ARRL Handbook for Radio Amateurs*, and shall consist of those valid licensed amateur operators having an interest in promoting amateur radio. Long distance communications (DX) is of special interest to members of the association, but said interest is not a requirement of membership.

Dues are \$30 per year for those using the PacketCluster maintained by the Association, \$15 otherwise, payable each January. Dues are payable by check to the Secretary/Treasurer:

Jim Miller, K4SQR
11600 Hilda Court

Aves Island DXpedition Cut Short

As many know by now, the Aves Island DXpedition was cut short by at least three days by adverse weather following Hurricane Alex's sweep up the Eastern Seaboard. About the same time Alex was ravishing Okracoke Island on the North Carolina Outer Banks, a sizable storm had formed near the windward islands of the Caribbean bringing the prospect of heavy seas to the area of Aves Island.



View of Aves Island "garrison". Maximum height of Aves above sea level is about 3 meters.

The garrison buildings at Aves, pictured above, rest on piers. The "buildings" appear to be pre-fabricated freight containers fastened together to form living accommodations. With the prospect of high seas, it appeared prudent to leave the island immediately on Wednesday morning, so radio operations were terminated to permit time to disassemble antennas and transport the gear back to the Venezuelan naval vessel standing close by offshore.

Since most of the gear had been transported ashore using inflatable "zodiac" boats, and seas were running high, the evacuation was hardly a cinch. Reports now coming out of the DXpedition team indicate that the seas were running as high as 5 meters during some part of the storm—hopefully not during zodiac use!

If you'd like to see some nice pictures of Aves taken during an earlier DXpedition to Aves (the picture above was extracted from this website) go to:

http://www.hfdx.org/frames_dl.html

(Thanks to Ted Goldthorpe for informing the editor of this excellent website with over a dozen pictures of Aves Island.)

Mountaintopping—What's It Like

By John Scott, K8YC

With the June VHF contest approaching, I was asked by Paul, AA4ZZ, if I'd like to take part in the contesting activities from his mountaintop station near Boone, North Carolina. I had been up to the mountain in early May to assist with putting the 2-meter antenna system together, so the opportunity to actually use that antenna was compelling.

You might wonder why the antenna farm is not just left up year around. I need only ask that you go back to the archives of the **Pileup** on the CDXA website and look at the picture on Page 6 of the January, 2003 issue. There, you'll see a photo of Roger Webb's mountaintop antenna with the mast bent over like a cornstalk in the wind. That's what can happen atop a mountain in the winter, except Roger's "cornstalk" was about a 2" diameter mast tube with about a 3/8" wall thickness. That's not your run-of-the-mill piece of aluminum tubing!! When you have antennas, phasing lines, and power splitters up there, you're not about to let Mother Nature play with your investment all winter long.

We put the 2 meter array up in May because Bill Fisher was to participate in the 2 meter Sprint Contest later that weekend. Earlier in the week before the June 12 contest start, Ken Boyd and Bill Fisher had been to the mountain to install the smaller FM vertically polarized beams and antennas for 2m, 220 MHz, and 440MHz. They also reeled out about 700 feet of telephone line to permit networking the 6m station with the VHF/UHF stations. When I arrived at noon on Friday, June 11, there was still plenty to do before contest time at 2:00 PM on Saturday. Ron Bailey, AA4S, had just burned up his electric weed whacker clearing the site. Fortunately, the more critical areas of grasses had been cut down. I was surprised how much the wild grasses had grown in the roughly four weeks since I'd been atop the mountain. Spring comes late on the mountaintops, but when it does come, things grow wildly. With the working area cleared, we began work on the 220 MHz beam pair and the 432 MHz quad-beam array. These were mounted on the holding frames on the tilt-over tower, the phasing harnesses added, all tied together with a power splitter and then all connectors were carefully taped to exclude rainwater. Next, the military surplus hardlines had their protective storage covers removed and were connected

to the antenna systems. To finish the VHF/UHF camp, a phased set of four 2m PAR Electronics Omniangle antennas was mounted on our "shack" and a raft of radio gear, carried up each contest weekend from Charlotte, was carefully connected. (See the October, 2001 issue of the **Pileup**, Page 5, available from the CDXA website to see how the electronics in a VHF/UHF contest station fit together.) The picture below shows the 2 meter array. You've seen this antenna before in the



Pileup, but it was always an "end on" view which did not give you an idea of the boom lengths of this array. Down the road a short distance, Roger Webb's mountaintop abode houses the "magic band" station. With the previously installed telephone wire and some limited distance modems, we interconnected logging software for the 6-meter station with the VHF/UHF stations to permit "passing" contacts from band to band. Roger's permanent six meter beam was supplemented by a German six meter "Big Wheel" antenna. The Big Wheel sat atop its own 18 foot long mast which was securely lashed to the deck of Roger's mountain abode. NOW we're ready!

When you're operating atop a mountain and you hear some thunder approaching, it doesn't take long to disconnect the antenna system. That happened several times on Saturday night. I wasn't sure if I really wanted to touch the connectors, but the short time it took to disconnect the seven feedlines coming into the shack seemed a better alternative than to share the shack with a million volts of wild lightning energy!

Old man Murphy visited us this weekend. On Sunday morning, an early start seemed to be netting few QSOs on 2m. Too quiet, we thought. Some checking showed high SWR on both our directional array and the omnidirectional system. We were dead on 2m! We found a

loose connector on the directional array, but finding the problem on the omnidirectional array was taking too much time away from operating, so it was forgotten. At contest end, we found a little water egress to the connectors during the evening rain had done us in. Fortunately, six meters was open pretty well throughout the weekend.

Gary Dixon, Ron Bailey, and Roger Webb held down the fort on 6 meters while Paul Trotter, Ted Goldthorpe, Bill Fisher, Scott Douglass and I cared for 2 m, 1.2 m and 70 cm. Contest rules mandate only operating one radio at a time per band. When we do periodic calling on 2m FM, the 2m SSB operator is nudged to cease operating while we get a few minutes operating time on FM. The FM operator then can “pass” the 70cm FM call to himself to handle all the FM calls before giving the frequency back to the SSB operator. (Note: Vertically polarized antennas are used on FM because most of the FM base, mobile and handitalkies use vertically polarized antennas. The 90 degree change in antenna polarization is the difference in hearing or not hearing a caller.) Ted Goldthorpe showed off his masterful work at getting every ham with a handitalkie within 100 miles of us to round up his friends to work us on FM. I’m not sure if it was Ted’s charm or the bragging rights at the next club meeting because of the great signal reports they got from Ted atop the mountain that had them swarming when Ted “held court”.

When I was the FM operator awaiting my turn, I sometimes listened to the 6m operation to see who they were working. Ron Bailey was “Mr. Steady”—always there and “running” like crazy. During one of my snack breaks, Ron mentioned that the Big Wheel was letting him hear and work stations in California that he couldn’t hear on the directional array. I guess that’s why they call it the “magic band”.



It would be unfair to leave the impression that things are “absolutely serious” during every moment of a contest weekend. Pictured to the left is Paul Trotter “adjusting” the SWR of the 220 MHz beam by shortening it with his pole saw in prep for the contest.

It was quite an instructive experience to see how a well appointed VHF contest station goes together. When it was all done, early claimed scores put us in about 7th place, so we won’t be atop the pile this time. I hope I am not deemed the party who invited Mr. Murphy to show his face, because it would be fun to operate a VHF contest again some time!

BPL—Is the Bloom Off the Rose?

Several recent developments in the Broadband over Power Line (BPL) arena offer encouragement that power companies are beginning to understand the issues that the amateur radio community has been raising since early in 2003.

An amateur in Cedar Rapids, Iowa filed an interference complaint leading to a discontinued BPL field trial there. In stopping its field trial, the power company stated that it had learned all it wanted from its trial. While not an assertion that it would henceforth not deploy BPL, the in-charge engineer’s statement seemed to acknowledge that there would be a never-ending effort to correct interference complaints.

The community of Penn Yan, New York indicated it would stop its deployment of BPL. The community owned electric utility in this town of 5,000 had believed it would generate revenue for its owned utility and offer broadband services to its citizens—a seemingly good deal all around. Except, amateur radio operators kept telling the city officials that they just didn’t understand the interference potential of their BPL offering. A few weeks back, the city officials announced that they were ceasing deployment of BPL and working on alternatives to provide broadband services using Wi-Fi.

Progress Energy near Raleigh, NC has announced that it is discontinuing Phase II of its BPL field trial. According to the an article on the ARRL website, an internal memorandum at Progress Energy stated, “Currently, the company does not have plans for a large-scale commercial rollout of BPL in the company’s service territories.” Those who have been following the BPL issue will recall that the corporate counsel of Progress shocked many in the amateur radio community by stating that by his understanding of the Part 15 rules he didn’t think Progress was creating “harmful interference” despite some great video documentation by area hams clearly showing significant interference near BPL equipped subdivisions.

The Wild West-Wanted Dead or Alive

(The item below, from an unidentified source, was forwarded to me by Roger Webb, W4MW. Roger's offered advice follows the announcement. —The Editor)

A reward of 500 microfarads is offered for information leading to the arrest of Hop-a-long capacity. This unrectified criminal escaped from a western primary cell where he had been clamped in ions awaiting the gauss chamber.

He is charged with the induction of an 18 turn coil named Milli Henry who was found choked and robbed of valuable joules. He is armed with a carbon rod and is a potential killer. Capacity is also charged with driving a DC motor over a wheatstone bridge and refusing to let the band-pass.

If encountered, he may offer series resistance. The electromotive force spent the night searching for him in a magnetic field, where he had gone to earth. They had no success and believed he had returned ohm via a short circuit. He was last seen riding a kilocycle with his friend Eddy Current, who was playing a harmonic.

Roger's reply: WATTS this? Hop-a-long Capacity has SKIPPED out! This reactance is unacceptable. Electromotive force must have the wrong shield. I would have placed him in a choke coil. DC might escape, but AC won't. If he cannot be arrested using a high impedance vehicle, then I think we can TRAP him using standing waves. If all else fails they should set up an ether-net.

(It must be the heat—it's affecting us all!)

"The Rest of the Story"

A number of you met Mauro Tomazzoni, IN3QBR, when he visited us in February, 2001 after his visit to Cambodia and Laos. (See the March, 2001 Pileup in the archives for details.) The name Fabrizio "Brix" Vedovelli, IN3ZNR, may be familiar to you as an organizer of the "African Double Jump" DXpedition in which Joe Blackwell, AA4NN, participated.

Both of these names should be familiar to you because they became members of CDXA providing us an "International" flavor earlier this year.

If you go back to the **Pileup** of July, 2003 you'll find an article about your editor's first-ever trip to Dayton and reference to a gang of guys sporting bright yellow shirts with the IH9P callsign emblazoned on them. Well,

Mauro and Brix, just happened to be members of the IH9P team, part of which is pictured below in their yellow shirts!



Okay, you say, so what's the big deal? Pull out the August, 2003 issue of CQ Magazine and review the results of the CQWW DX SSB contest. The IH9P gang just happened to be the WORLD CHAMPS in that contest in the Multi-Op, Multi-Transmitter category with 49,469,160 points. Their closest competitor and only other team scoring more than 30 Million points that year was A61AJ with 33,377,700 points. And that, my friends, is "the rest of the story".

CQWW DX SSB—2003 Version

In the past few weeks the August, 2004 issue of CQ Magazine arrived. Its arrival signaled the reporting of the 2003 CQWW DX SSB contest.

One notable item that stood out was that Bill Tippett, W4ZV, continued to hold his own as winner of the USA-28 MHz category with 896,636 points to his credit. Congratulations, Bill.

The other notable item was that the Carolina DX Association was identified as the donor of the trophy for the USA winner of the Multi-Operator, Single Transmitter section of the contest.

The officers continue, where possible, to support DXing and contesting, and to keep the name of the Carolina DX Association in front of the amateur radio community at large. Thanks to you, our dues paying members, for helping with this effort.

The Back Page

Every once in a while, a really significant **DXpedition** comes along that warrants special attention. Please read the article regarding **Peter I Island** on Page 1 of this issue. Also, please carefully consider making a donation to provide financial support for this DXpedition. Details are spelled out in the article.

Did everyone see **Kent Miller's, K4MK**, 75m yagi pictured on the front page of the July 21, 2004 issue of QRZ DX? Many of us knew Kent's project was in the works, but as they say, "Good things take time". What a beauty. Let us know how it works, huh, Kent?

There's been some pretty good hunting of 6 meter contacts this summer. We're happy to report that **Itice Goldthorpe, K4LVV**, accomplished what she and Ted set as a goal when they rented a mountaintop home this summer to chase the 6 meter openings. Itice snagged her 99th and 100th entities on 6 meters and is now awaiting QSL cards. Ironically, her 100th was earned by working Aves Island, YV0D, sitting in a car outside her home in Charlotte using a halo antenna attached to the car! Yet, Ted and Itice still are enjoying their "Dream Mountain" setting and still looking for more 6 meter "new ones".

Upcoming Contest Activity:

Date(s)	Contest	Comments
Sept 4-5	All Asian SSB DX Contest	
Sept 11-12	WAE SSB DX Contest	QST, August 2004, P. 94 for details
Sept 11-13	ARRL September VHF QSO Party	Watch for AA4ZZ here!
Sept 25-26	CQWW RTTY DX Contest	See www.cq-amateur-radio.com
Oct 30-31	CQWW DX SSB Contest	Will be a CWAC event!
Nov 27-28	CQWW DX CW Contest	Will be a CWAC event!

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First Class Mail

See something wrong with your address label? Notify K4SQR at once, please.